

Ten Ways Court Systems Can Help Make Connections to New Health Insurance Opportunities

As millions of Americans become eligible for new, affordable health insurance options in 2014, court systems can play a vital role in making sure people learn about health coverage and get help applying. By helping people apply for health insurance, court systems can help large numbers of people with mental illness, substance use disorders and other chronic conditions gain access to primary and behavioral health care. Improving their access to health care services can help protect public health and safety.

Depending on the state, many more people may qualify for Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Many people who do not have health insurance will now be able to get it, and many may also qualify for help that makes coverage easier to afford. Open enrollment for health coverage through the Marketplace runs from October 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014. People can apply for Medicaid and CHIP at any time. Some special rules apply to people who are incarcerated.

Here's how court systems can contribute to the outreach and enrollment effort:

Share Basic Information

- 1. Educate court personnel on the new health insurance opportunities.** Encourage them to include information about Medicaid, CHIP and coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace when they talk with justice-involved individuals and their families. Knowing the basics about new health insurance opportunities, and the individual's responsibility to get covered, ensures these professionals are providing the best service. Training materials and videos can be found at **Marketplace.cms.gov**.
- 2. Help staff become familiar with eligibility and enrollment rules, including special rules that may apply.** For example, individuals who are detained pending disposition of charges may enroll and receive coverage through the Marketplace. Those detained following disposition of charges are not eligible to enroll in coverage offered through the Marketplace, but may apply prior to release or during a 60-day window following reentry into the community. Detainees may apply for Medicaid and CHIP at any point. However, if determined eligible for Medicaid, eligibility must be suspended while incarcerated, and health care services cannot be covered by Medicaid until release, except for off-site inpatient medical care lasting 24 hours or more. An applicant cannot be determined eligible for CHIP while incarcerated.

- 3. Reach out to people held pending disposition of charges, those released on bond and probationers living in the community.** Highlight what coverage options are available, as well as when, where and how to apply. Help them understand the new requirement to obtain health insurance coverage. Explain how individuals can get more information and direct them to available application support services.
- 4. Display consumer materials explaining the basics of Medicaid, CHIP and coverage through the Marketplace and how to apply.** Key locations include common areas and probationer waiting rooms. Families of individuals involved in court proceedings may be eligible for coverage as well.
- 5. Provide education materials to public defenders, law firms, and other key personnel.** Build on the relationship that these groups have with their clients to share information about health insurance enrollment and the new requirement to obtain health insurance coverage.

Help People Under Supervision Apply for Coverage

- 6. Find out how your system's administrative process can accommodate the health coverage application process.** Determine whether any security, administrative, or structural changes need to be made to provide access to applications and foster effective collaboration with the Marketplace and Medicaid agency. For example, are there any court rules or procedures pertaining to individuals using computers or the internet in certain buildings or areas?
- 7. Assist people in applying for health coverage.** People released on bond, those under pre-trial supervision and probationers are all eligible to apply for coverage without restrictions. Applications may be submitted online, by phone, by mail and in-person. If possible, make computer terminals and phones available and assign trained staff to provide needed help to individuals with the application process.
- 8. Provide access to health insurance marketplace applications.** Provide computer terminals, paper applications, or telephones to help facilitate enrollment for individuals. Applications and other information could be available in pre-trial waiting areas and other locations.
- 9. Engage key community agencies in providing application assistance.** Organizations that work with people involved in the court system can augment the help that court staff may be able to offer. A list of local community agencies that are certified application counselors that provide application assistance can be found on **Localhelp.HealthCare.gov**.

Promote Promising Practices

- 10. Share ideas and successful experiences.** Document your approach to outreach and enrollment, barriers you encountered and your accomplishments. Other court systems can benefit greatly from your good work and leadership.

For More Information

For more information: Visit **HealthCare.gov** or **CuidadoDeSalud.gov**, or call the Health Insurance Marketplace Call Center at 1-800-318-2596. TTY users should call 1-855-889-4325. Visit **Marketplace.cms.gov** for Marketplace widgets and badges and other partner materials.